

**Montana Department of Military Affairs
Disaster & Emergency Services Division
State Emergency Coordination Center**

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Situation Report for August 10, 2003 (issued @ 14:00 hrs.)

Wildfires of 2003

Attention * - New information shown in today's report displayed in ***Bold Italics*** type.

I. Montana Fire Conditions and Background Information:

Over the past weeks Initial Attack Resources have been successful in controlling and containing outbreaks of wildfire. Current concerns include the continued management of fires within the Flathead Area Command as well as the Slims and Black Frog Complex fires. In addition, the Deep Fire, located near I-15 a few miles south of the Montana state line on the Idaho/Montana border, reached 23,000 acres last night due to gusty winds that continue to push it through grass, sagebrush, and pockets of timber. Authorities in Montana continue to track its progress.

II. Current Montana Fire Situation: (as reported to NRCC ***August 8, 2003 (2130)***)

A. Large Fires

NORTHERN ROCKIES DAILY SUMMARY

Date: August 9, 2003 (2400)

Northern Rockies Preparedness Level = 5

National Preparedness Level = 4

Heavy initial attack – 187 new fires for 4,560 acres

- ***Cherry Creek – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Swope) – 300 acres, 0% contained, 12 miles SE of Thompson Falls, MT.***
- ***Beaver Lake – Type 2 Incident Management Team (Chrisman) will assume command at 0600 8/10, 900 acres, 0% contained, 19 miles SW of Missoula, Montana.***
- ***Rough Draw – 40-60 acres, 0% contained, 8 miles S of Livingston, Montana. Type 1 Incident Management Team has been ordered.***
- ***North Howard – 100 acres, 0% contained, 16 miles SW of Missoula, Montana. Type 2 Incident Management Team (Kechter) has been ordered.***
- ***Hobble – 2,000 acres, 0% contained, 5 miles NE of Greycliff, Montana.***
- ***Flathead Area Command (Mann) is managing the large fires on the Flathead National Forest and Glacier National Park.***
 - ***Wedge Canyon – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Bennett), 25,723***

acres, 65% contained, 20 miles E of Eureka, Montana. Transition to Hart's Type 1 Incident Management Team will occur at 0600 8/10.

Robert – Type 1 Incident Management Team (Ferguson), 23,950 acres, 58% contained, 8 miles N of Columbia Falls, Montana.

- *Trapper Creek Complex – Complex is 20,522 acres, 60% contained. This Complex is made up of the Trapper Creek (15,910 acres – 60% contained), Trout (1/4 acre – 100% contained) fires managed by Bennett's Type 1 Incident Management Team, and the Paul Bunyan (300 acres – 100% contained), Wolf Gun (4,311 acres – 55% contained) fires managed by Ferguson's Type 1 Incident Management Team. This complex is located 45 statute miles NE of Kalispell, Montana.*
- *Little Salmon Creek Complex – Fire Use Management Team (Rath) assumed command today. This 14,300 acre lightning caused Wildland Fire Use complex is located 47 miles SE of Kalispell, Montana in the Bob Marshall Wilderness. This complex, made up of the Pagoda (125 acres) and the Little Salmon (14,175 acres), is being managed to accomplish resource objectives.*
- *Black Frog Complex – This Complex is made up of the Blackwall fire (4,515 acres – 95% contained), located 32 miles N of Salmon, Idaho and the Frog Pond fire (2,082 acres – 100% contained), as well as numerous concentrations of spots on both fires for a total of 7,275 acres located 34 miles S of Hamilton, Montana. This will be the last report of these 2 fires as the Blackfrog Complex as command of the Blackwall is being transferred to the Wisdom District on the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest and command of the Frog Pond fire is being transferred to the North Fork District of the Salmon-Challis National Forest.*
- *Fish Creek – 400 acres, 0% contained, 25 miles W of Missoula, Montana. Type 2 Incident Management Team (Benes) has been ordered.*
- *Gold 1 – 80 acres, 0% contained, 33 miles S of Missoula, Montana. Type 2 Incident Management Team has been ordered.*
- *Cooney Ridge #3 – no acreage provided, 0 % contained, 20 miles SE of Missoula, Montana. Type 2 Incident Management Team has been ordered.*
- *Boles Meadow - 15-20 acres, 0% contained, 19 miles NE of Missoula, Montana. Type 2 Incident Management Team has been ordered.*
- *Pioneer Lake – 75 acres, 0% contained, 23 miles S of Bozeman, Montana.*
- *Cottonwood – 200 acres, 100% contained and controlled, 12 miles SW of Roundup, Montana.*

Reported Major Fire Activity: Report Date: August 10th, 2003

<i>Wedge Canyon:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$16,300,000</i>	<i>% contained: 65%</i>
<i>Roberts Fire:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$11,280,000</i>	<i>% contained: 58%</i>
<i>Trapper Creek Complex:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$3,027,566</i>	<i>% contained: 60%</i>
<i>Little Salmon Complex:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$695,000</i>	<i>% contained: NR%</i>

<i>Big Creek:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$4,048,200</i>	<i>% contained:90%</i>
<i>Black Frog Complex:</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$9,412,000</i>	<i>% contained: 97%</i>
<i>Cherry Creek</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$120,000</i>	<i>% contained: 0%</i>
<i>Cottonwood</i>	<i>Estimated Cost:</i>	<i>\$50,000</i>	<i>% contained: 100%</i>

B. Initial Attack *Heavy initial attack – 187 new fires for 4,560 acres*

C. State Forecast For Montana

***STATE FORECAST FOR MONTANA
NATIONAL WEATHER SERVICE GREAT FALLS MT
451 AM MDT SUN AUG 10 2003***

WEST OF THE CONTINENTAL DIVIDE

Today - Partly Cloudy. Isolated Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs 91 To 101.

Tonight - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Lows 49 To 59.

Monday - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs 84 To 94.

CENTRAL MONTANA

Today - Mostly Sunny. Highs In The Upper 80s To Mid 90s.

***Tonight - Partly Cloudy. Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms In The Evening Then
Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms After Midnight. Lows In
The 50s.***

***Monday - Partly Cloudy In The Morning Then Clearing. Highs In The Mid 80s To
Upper 90s.***

SOUTHWEST MONTANA

***Today - Sunny In The Morning Then Becoming Partly Cloudy. Highs In The Lower
80s To Lower 90s.***

***Tonight - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Lows In The
Mid 40s To Lower 50s.***

***Monday - Partly Cloudy. Slight Chance Of Showers And Thunderstorms. Highs In The
Upper 70s To Lower 90s.***

EASTERN AND SOUTHERN MONTANA

Lake Wind Advisory For Fort Peck Lake This Afternoon And Evening...

***Today - Partly Cloudy. Windy Northeast. A Chance Of Thunderstorms Mainly
Southwest. Highs In The Upper 80s Northeast To Around 100.***

***Tonight - Partly Cloudy. A Chance Of Evening Thunderstorms Southeast
Through Southwest. Continued Windy Northeast. Lows In The Mid 50s
West To Mid 60s Elsewhere.***

***Monday - Mostly Sunny And Continued Windy Northeast. Partly Cloudy Elsewhere. A
Chance Of Afternoon Thunderstorms Southeast Through Southwest. Highs
Highs In The 90s To Around 103.***

III. - Summary of Actions being taken by Local Government Officials:

Local government resources from various jurisdictions have been actively engaged in fire fighting efforts, particularly during the past several days. The evacuation of residents whose properties have been threatened have been conducted as required.

<u>Local Emergency and Disaster Declarations</u>		<u>Date Filed</u>
Cascade County	Emergency Declaration (Box Canyon/Long Mtn.)	7/15/03
Garfield County	Disaster Declaration (Missouri Breaks)	7/15/03
Beaverhead County	Emergency Resolution (multiple fires)	7/17/03
Ravalli County	Emergency Declaration (Big Creek)	7/20/03
Flathead County	Emergency Declaration (Wedge Canyon)	7/21/03
Sanders County	Resolution (Stage II Fire Restrictions)	7/29/03
Fallon County	Resolution (Stage I Fire Restrictions)	8/04/03
CSKT Flathead	Resolution (Tribal/Forest/Range Closure)	8/04/03
Blaine County	Emergency Declaration (150 acre fire)	8/06/03

IV. - Summary of State Activities and Resources Committed:

State, Local and Tribal Declarations:

On 8/07/03, Governor Judy Martz signed Executive Order # 16-03 in which she declared a statewide disaster thereby enabling mobilization of state resources (including the Montana National Guard) should they be needed to help protect the life, health and/or property of Montana's citizens. This declaration supplements Executive Order # 14-03, a statewide emergency declaration issued on 7/18/03.

The Flathead County Board of Commissioners passed a resolution on August 4th, 2003 stating that because the weather forecasts indicated no relief from the dry conditions and fires continued in the county it was "resolved that stage II fire restrictions on all State forested lands and all private forested lands open to the public" will be in effect until otherwise stated.

On 8/09/03 Park County issued an emergency declaration.

FEMA Declarations:

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 23rd, 2003 for Missouri Breaks Complex fire.

FEMA Fire Management Assistance Declaration approved on July 25th, 2003 for Flathead County's Wedge Canyon and Roberts fires.

Requests for State Assistance:

- The Montana National Guard is assisting "initial attack" fire suppression operations by supplying 3 UH-60 (Blackhawk) Helicopters modules and one UH-1 Helicopter module and approximately 45 soldiers. One Blackhawk helicopter module is currently assigned to the Flathead Interagency Dispatch Center, another is assigned to the Helena Interagency Dispatch Center, and the third is assigned to Missoula. The UH-1 helicopter

module is currently deployed to Billings. The Montana National Guard Personnel Resources currently allocated to wild land fire suppression duties stands at 45. The National Guard will be rotating in new air crews in Helena and Kalispell this weekend.

- One NG Liaison Officer has been assigned to the Northern Rockies Coordination Center (NGCC) in Missoula.
- MT Highway Patrol and MT Department of Transportation are supporting fire efforts with local jurisdictions and fire management to limit travel disturbances.

Status of State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC)

- Montana DES is providing support to local governments through the State Emergency Coordination Center in Helena. The SECC is currently operating at Activation Level III. Level III operations include a full staff 0800-1700 during weekdays with a duty officer on call after hours. Weekend operations will be staffed at Level II from 0800-1700 unless it becomes necessary to advance to a higher activation level.

The State Emergency Coordination Center (SECC) will continue to monitor conditions and is prepared to provide 24-hour incident support to local governments. After office hours (i.e., 1700-0700) support is available through the DES Duty Officer who may be reached at (406) 841-3911.

Addendums to Situation Report

As of: **August 9th, 2003**

General Fire Information and Severity to Date

- Plum Creek has closed all private and public use on their holdings, logging operations are also shut down
- Currently there are no overnight facilities at Apgar or West Glacier.
- Large Season ending storm not expected until mid-September or early October.
- Closures are likely to remain in effect for the remainder of the season.
- General Cost for fires under Northern Rockies Coordination and acreage total [from Northern Rockies Priorities List -acreage estimate on active fires]:
- Cost: \$42.8 million Acreage: 107,192
- On August 10th, 2003 Interagency Dispatch requested a winch capable helicopter for the retrieval of an injured smokejumper on an initial attack mission in the Gates of the Mountains wilderness area near the Willow Peak fire. ***The smokejumper was successfully retrieved and is recovering.***

Fire Restrictions and Closures

<u>Zone</u>	<u>Restrictions</u>	<u>Effective Date</u>
Northwestern Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Southwestern Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Central Montana Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
South Central Zone	Stage II Restrictions	July 28, 2003
Eastern Montana Zone		
<u>Stage I Restrictions (Billings)</u>		July 18, 2003

Stage II Restrictions

State & Private: Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, Sweet Grass, Mussellshell July 25, 2003

Federal: Carbon, Stillwater, Treasure, Sweet Grass, Mussellshell July 18, 2003

Stage I Restrictions (Lewistown)

July 21, 2003

Stage II Restrictions

State & Private: Hill, Chouteau, Judith Basin, Petroleum, Blaine, Phillips,
Valley, Roosevelt, Sheridan, Fergus, Golden Valley, Daniels July 21, 2003

Federal: Chouteau, Fergus, Judith Basin, Wheatland July 25, 2003

Stage I Restrictions (Miles City)

August 04, 2003

State & Private: Richland, Dawson, Wibaux, Prairie, Fallon, McCone, Garfield,
Custer, Powder River, Carter, and Rosebud

Federal: Richland, Dawson, Wibaux, Prairie, Fallon, McCone, Garfield,
Custer, Powder River, Carter, and Rosebud counties

Road Closures: Information is current as of 08-08-03

Southwest

The Foothills and Gibbonsville roads, west of Wisdom, in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest are now open. The Gibbonsville road will not be open in Idaho, in the Salmon-Challis National Forest, for the time being. Several roads and trails in the Beaverhead-Deerlodge National Forest will stay closed while fire-fighting operations continue. Still closed are all trails between the Gibbonsville road and Highway 43, trailheads at Cabinet and Richardson creeks, the Anderson Mountain road, and the May Creek campground. Fire fighters are still doing mop-up and helicopters are busy in this area, making it unsafe to open for the public just yet

Northwest

More than 75% of Glacier National Park is OPEN. Access is available by U.S. Highways 2, 49, 89, and the historic Going to the Sun Road from St. Mary to Logan Pass. The Inside North Fork Road (north and south of Polebridge) is open from Fish Creek to Big Prairie, just north of Polebridge, but is closed from Big Prairie north. The Going-to-the-Sun Road is open from Avalanche to Logan Pass between the hours of 10 a.m. and 6 p.m. only. No stopping is allowed from Avalanche to Logan Pass. 24-hour travel on the Going-to-the-Sun Road is permitted between St. Mary and Logan Pass only. Apgar Village in the Lake McDonald Valley, Many Glacier, St. Mary, Two Medicine, Goat Haunt, and the backcountry area of the Belly River are open. Due to the Wedge Canyon Fire, The North Fork area of Glacier National Park is closed to visitor use at this time.

Web Links:

Glacier National Park Fire Management:

<http://www.nps.gov/glac/resources/fires.htm>

Northern Rockies Interagency Information Center

<http://fs.fed.us/r1/fire/2003fires/index.htm>